



**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF THE
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL**

**SUBMITTED TO THE ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE,
IN REFERENCE TO HOUSE BILL NO. 5544
AN ACT CONCERNING
STORM PREPARATION AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE
MARCH 20, 2012**

Good afternoon Senator Fonfara, Representative Nardello, ranking and distinguished members of the Energy and Technology Committee.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in connection with Raised Bill No. 5544, An Act Concerning Storm Preparation and Emergency Response.

This bill seeks to review the emergency response and service restoration efforts of certain public service companies, to establish emergency response and service restoration standards for such companies and to establish a micro-grid grant and loan pilot program.

The Connecticut Siting Council (Council) is in full support of these initiatives and would like to offer testimony on two particular aspects of the bill.

Section 4 states that each telecommunications company shall maintain back-up generation equipment sufficient to operate for not less than seventy-two hours without electric service for any tower or antenna operated by the company. The Council has jurisdiction over telecommunications towers only, but would like to bring to the committee's attention that some antenna locations (e.g. rooftops), make providing the required generation problematic. As far as towers are concerned, we do agree extended back-up generation should be required for all towers going forward, but would like some discretion to adjust the length of time, based on the specific characteristics of each site.

Section 12(4)(c) States that DEEP shall give preference to any microgrid project with anticipated completion date on or before Oct 1st 2012. From our perspective, that date will not provide enough time for DEEP to create the microgrid program, accept applications for funding, complete the siting process, and oversee the project through construction. A microgrid powered by fuel cells can be put forward as a petition, which would shorten the siting process; however, the Council would still need adequate time to review the petition, conduct a site visit, approve a development and management plan, if required, and conduct a final inspection. From start to finish, these steps would take 60 to 90 days at a minimum. Although the Council supports the concept of microgrids, we think that in order to maintain an equitable process and to allow for due diligence the anticipated completion date should be extended.

In summary, I would like to repeat that the Council believes this proposed legislation is a very important part of assuring our residents are protected and communications are maintained during power outages. Thus, we support the passage of Raised Bill No 5544.

Linda Roberts
Executive Director